

Appl. No. 10/016,984
Amdt. dated 6/17/2004
Reply to Office action of 3/17/2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-6: (Cancelled)

Claim 7. (Currently Amended): A surgical instrument comprising:

a body having a handle portion and a distal end with an instrument extending therefrom;

and

a guard member disposed around the instrument body being selectively slidable along and around the instrument body, the guard member comprising:

a first opening formed[[therethrough]] for receiving [[the handle portion]] a reduced diameter portion of the instrument body[[.]];

a second opening formed[[therethrough]] opposite the first opening for receiving the distal end of the instrument body[[, and]];

a third opening formed[[therethrough]] between the first and second openings and extending to the first opening partially exposing the instrument; and

a means for locking the guard member in either an open position to expose the instrument, or a closed position to protect the instrument comprising threads.

Claim 8. (Original): The surgical instrument of claim 7 further comprising a grip on the guard member.

Claim 9. (Original): The surgical instrument of claim 7 wherein the guard member is translucent.

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Claim 10. (Original): The surgical instrument of claim 8 wherein the guard member is translucent.

Claim 11. (Original): The surgical instrument of claim 7 wherein the guard member is translucent and includes a plurality of protrusions formed on the exterior thereof.

Claims 12-21. (Canceled)

Claim 22. (Currently Amended): The surgical instrument of claim [[21]]7 further including a plurality of protrusions formed on the exterior of the guard member, the protrusions facilitating movement of the guard member and reducing rolling capacity of the surgical instrument.

Claims 23-28. (Canceled)

Claim 29. (New): The surgical instrument of claim 7 wherein the reduced diameter portion of the instrument body includes a first set of external threads and a second set of external threads.

Claim 30. (New): The surgical instrument of claim 22 wherein the reduced diameter portion of the instrument body includes a first set of external threads and a second set of external threads.